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OPERATIONS

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 PAGE 001 OF 002*Ed Sal*

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REISSUE OF [REDACTED] TO ADD PORTION MISSING IN PARA  
 FOUR IN ORIGINAL DISSEMINATION.

DIST: 10 JANUARY 1983  
 COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR  
 SUBJECT: STATUS OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN MINISTER OF DEFENSE  
 AND THE CABANAS DEPARTMENTAL COMMANDER

DOI:  
 SOURCE: [REDACTED]

(b)(3) NatSecAct

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TEXT: 1. GENERAL JOSE GUILLERMO ((GARCIA)), MINISTER OF DEFENSE, AND COL. RAFAEL ((FLORES)) LIMA, CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES GENERAL STAFF, CONTINUE TO MEET REGULARLY WITH KEY FIELD COMMANDERS TO SEEK A SOLUTION TO THE REBELLION OF LTC. SIGIFREDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ, COMMANDER OF MILITARY DETACHMENT 2, WHO REMAINS IN CABANAS DEPARTMENT AND INSISTS ON GARCIA'S RESIGNATION. HOWEVER, BOTH GARCIA AND OCHOA ARE BECOMING MORE FLEXIBLE AND IT IS LIKELY THAT A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT WILL RESULT.

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2. GARCIA HAS CONFIDED THAT, IF OCHOA CONCEDES AND ACCEPTS AN OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENT, HE IS WILLING TO RETIRE FROM THE ARMY, PERHAPS TWO TO THREE MONTHS LATER. FLORES LIMA HAS PRIVATELY ADVISED GARCIA THAT, IF THE LEVEL OF OPPOSITION AGAINST HIM CONTINUES, HE SHOULD CONSIDER RETIRING TO LIMIT DISUNITY IN THE INSTITUTION. WHILE GARCIA WAS AWARE OF DISSENT TOWARDS HIM THROUGHOUT THE ARMED FORCES, HE AND FLORES LIMA WERE SURPRISED BY THE EXTENT OF SYMPATHY WITHIN THE AIR FORCE FOR OCHOA'S POSITION. PRESSURE IS BUILDING FOR GARCIA TO RESIGN AND, AS OF THE AFTERNOON OF 10 JANUARY, THE FOLLOWING COMMANDERS CONTINUE TO

REQUEST THAT HE DO SO:

COL. ADOLFO O. ((BLANDON)), COMMANDER OF THE 1ST INFANTRY BRIGADE;  
 COL. JUAN RAFAEL ((BUSTILLO)), COMMANDER OF THE AIR FORCE;  
 COL. JAIME ERNESTO ((FLORES)), COMMANDER OF SAN MIGUEL DEPARTMENT;  
 LTC. NAPOLEON HERSON ((CALITO)) ARBAIZA, COMMANDER OF THE ATONAL BATTALION;  
 LTC. DOMINGO ((MONTERROSA)) BARRIOS, COMMANDER OF THE ATLACATL BATTALION;  
 LTC. MIGUEL ANTONIO ((MENDEZ)), COMMANDER OF THE RAMON BELLOSO BATTALION.

3. ALL KEY FIELD COMMANDERS AGREED THAT IN THE INTERESTS OF INSTITUTIONAL DISCIPLINE AND COMMAND INTEGRITY, OCHOA MUST BE TRANSFERRED TO AN OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENT, ALTHOUGH NOT NECESSARILY AS MILITARY ATTACHE TO URUGUAY, AS ORIGINALLY ORDERED BY GARCIA. GARCIA HAS SCHEDULED ANOTHER MEETING OF FIELD COMMANDERS TO BEGIN AT 0800 HOURS ON 11 JANUARY. ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING MADE

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3

WARNING NOTICE

IN 07 0248270A

PAGE 002 OF 002

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FOR A MEETING, [REDACTED] BETWEEN OCHOA,  
GARCIA, FLORES LIMA AND GEN. EUGENIO ((VIDES)) CASANOVA,  
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL GUARD, TO BE HELD AT THE  
ILOPANGO AIR BASE.

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4. VIDES CASANOVA CURRENTLY IS THE MOST LIKELY CANDIDATE TO REPLACE GARCIA. IN THIS CASE, FLORES LIMA SAID HE WOULD BE WILLING TO REMAIN AS CHIEF OF STAFF BUT WOULD LEAVE THE ARMY IF BUSTILLO OR BLANDON, WHO HAVE BEEN MENTIONED AS POSSIBLE REPLACEMENTS, WERE APPOINTED. FLORES LIMA SAID HIS POSITION IN THE ARMY IS SOLID AND RECENTLY THERE HAVE BEEN EXPRESSIONS OF RESPECT AND SUPPORT FOR HIM FROM VARIOUS OFFICERS, INCLUDING MAJOR LUIS ROBERTO ((RODRIGUEZ)) SOSA, EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE SECOND MILITARY DETACHMENT IN CABANAS. IN AN ATTEMPT TO IMPROVE MILITARY PERFORMANCE AND IN RESPONSE TO THE COMPLAINTS OF NUMEROUS OFFICERS, FLORES LIMA INCLUDED ON HIS DRAFT OF THE ORDER TRANSFERRING OCHOA, THE REASSIGNMENT OF THE FOLLOWING INCOMPETENT OFFICERS WHO ARE GARCIA SUPPORTERS, TO NON-COMMAND POSITIONS:

COL. MARIO ADALBERTO ((REYES)) MENA, COMMANDER OF SANTA ANA DEPARTMENT;

COL. RAMON ANTONIO ((NORALES)) RUIZ, COMMANDER OF LA UNION DEPARTMENT;

COL. ROBERTO DE JESUS ((MONTERROSA)) BONILLA, COMMANDER OF THE NATIONAL NAVY;

COL. NAPOLEON ((ALVARADO)), COMMANDER OF SAN VICENTE DEPARTMENT;

COL. ELMER ((ARABUO)) GONZALEZ, COMMANDER OF SONSONATE DEPARTMENT.

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[REDACTED] COMMENT: GARCIA REFUSED TO TRANSFER THESE OFFICERS BECAUSE OF THEIR PERSONAL LOYALTY TO HIM. HAD HE DONE SO, THIS WOULD HAVE BALANCED THE ORDER TRANSFERRING OCHOA AND WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE ACCEPTABLE TO GARCIA'S OPPONENTS.)

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